



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretaries, LMM, F&WP
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Bureau Directors, BLM, FWS, NPS
Bureau Assistant Directors for Administration, BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA
Bureau Fire Directors
Bureau Procurement Chiefs, BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA

From: P. Lynn Scarlett *P2 S*
Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget

Subject: **National Fire Plan Acquisition Workload Accomplishment**

Our goal is to increase the use of contracting to support the National Fire Plan mission of hazardous fuels reduction and rehabilitation and to stimulate local economies. Our performance target is to contract for 35% of funded projects for fuels treatment and burned area rehabilitation projects in FY 2003 and 50% in FY 2004. Interior fire plan contracting increased from approximately \$65 million in FY 2001 to over \$86 million in FY 2002. These data represent 17% of available funds in FY 2001 and 21% in FY 2002.

I was recently advised that as much as \$50 million of fireplan funding that was available for on-the-ground project work as "left on the table" in FY 2002. Projects that should have been awarded were not due to a variety of reasons, including a long and busy fire season, late funding approval, shortage of contracting staff and/or trained contracting officer's representatives and shortage of resources staff for project planning. To ensure meeting our stated goals for hazardous fuels reduction and emergency stabilization and for contracting the work, we are considering options such as:

- Moving fire plan contracting workload, and related staff positions, from buying offices that have not performed well to those that have, or to franchise buying units at MMS or NBC.
- Creating a fire plan contracting center of excellence to award specific inter-agency contracts and to handle all other actions over a given dollar threshold.
- Hiring one or more Governmentwide Acquisition Interns to the program for each bureau, paid by fire plan funds, to be used to backfill behind journeyman procurement professionals who can then be detailed to critical fire plan contracting work.

I am asking that each fireplan bureau review their FY 2002 fireplan contracting accomplishments and determine the following:

- How much FY 2002 fuels and rehab project funding was available for contracting but was not awarded?
- How much of that funding was awarded in the first quarter of FY 2003?

- What were the primary reasons for the failure to complete these awards in FY 2002?
- What is being done at the bureau level to ensure success in achieving fire plan contracting goals?

Your resulting report addressing the above issues should be provided to Debra Sonderman, Director, Office of Acquisition and Property Management, by February 28, 2003. Your staff may direct their questions on this issue to Wiley Horsley of her staff at 202-208-3347 or by e-mail at wiley_horsley@ios.doi.gov.

cc: Debra Sonderman, PAM
Tim Hartzell, OWFC
John Trezise, POB